(c) what is the outcome of these raids conducted on stockbrokers and firms in the country; and

(d) what action has been taken/proposed to be taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) On 7.7.1994 and 12.7.94, CBI conducted raids on stockbroking firms at 44 places in the country in connec tion with bant scam cases.

(c) The relevant incriminating documents have been seized during the searches which are being scrutinsed by CBI.

(d) As the investigation of the cases by the CBI is not yet over, it is premature to indicate the action proposed to be taken in the matter.

Freefloat of rupee

1949. SHRI ANANTRAY DEV-SHANKER DAVE: SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Wilt the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons that Government do not permit free float Of a rupee against foreign currencies in India:

(b) whether it is a fact that the exchange rate of a dollar against rupee would find the ratio of 1 to 28 as against prevailing RBl ratio of 1 to 31.4;

(c) how long the ratio of 1 to 28 would be sustainable; and

(d) whether it is likely to make ex ports more costly and less profitable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) After the unification of the exchange rate in March 1993, the exchange rate has been determined by demand for and supply of foreign exchange in the market As there was excess supply of foreign exchange in the market the Reserve Bank of India has been purchasing foreign exchange in order to build op reserves which are required to meet any contingency which may arise from time to time in the context of a more open economy.

(b) and (c) Given that the exchange rate is market determined, its future level cannot be predicted with any certainty.

(d) If the exchange rate was to ap preciate, exports will become more costly and less profitable and this may hurt our export growth.

Decline in NSS

1950. SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL; Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total amount presently deposited in the National Savings Scheme accounts in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that the deposits to the National Savings Scheme accounts have declined sharply after the introduction of provision of deduction of income tax @ 20 percent from the withdrawn amount; if so, details of estimated decline in deposits:

(c) whether it is a fact that the provision regarding deduction of Income Tax from the amount withdrawn from the NSS has resulted in harassment to the Government employees holding such accounts and has not served the purpose for which this provision, was introduced; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that provision regarding deduction of Income tax from the withdrawn amount had virtually a retrospective application rather than a prospective one; if so, whether Govemment propose to review the continuance of this provision after obtaining legal advice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) National Savings Scheme, 1987 was introduced from 1.4.87. The outstanding balance under this Scheme as on 31.3.1994 (provisional) was Rs. 6273 crores. Consequent on withdrawal of tax concessions under section 80 CCA of the Income Tax Act. this Scheme was discontinued from 1.10.92. Another Scheme, namely. National Sav-ings Scheme, 1992 was introduced from 1.10.1992. The outstanding balance under this Scheme as on 31.3.94 (provisional) was Rs. 326 crores.

(b) At present, the provision of rax deduction at source is applicable to National Savings Scheme, 1987. As this Scheme was discontinued from 1-10-92, the question of decline in deposits under this Scheme does not arise. The provision of tax deduction at source is not applicable to National Saving, Scheme, 1992.

(c) No, Sir. The tax deducted at source is adjusted against the depositor's tax liability, as determined by Assessing Officer. The provision regarding deduction of income tax at source ensure, interalia, that the concerned depositors pay due tax on their total income which include the amount withdrawn from National Savings Scheme. 1987.

(d) No. Sir. The provision regarding deduction of income tax from the amount withdrawn under National Savings Scheme, 1987 does not have retrospective application. This provision applies prospectively since deduction of tax at source has to be made only when the money is withdrawn by the depositors.

Reviewing the policy of additional excise doty

1951, SHRI YERRA NARAYANA-SWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are reviewing the policy to replace sales tax by additional Excise Duty;

(b) if so, details of representations received in this regard; and

(c) what is the opinion of State Go vernments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Sales Tax on only three items namely euger, textile and to-bacco was replaced by Additional Excise Duty following the decision taken at a meeting of National Development Council held in December, 1956. There is no move to replace sales tax on any other commodity by Additional Excise Duty.

(b) Government h[a]s not received any representation to replace sales tax by Additional Excise Duty.

(c) In view of (a) and (b) above, question of seeking opinion of State Government does not arise.

लघु उद्योगों को उत्पाद शुल्क से मुक्त किया जाना

1952. श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार को इस तथ्य की जानकारी है कि देश के विभिन्न नगरों में कांच के नग जड़ित लाख की चूड़ियां बनाने का कुटीर उद्योग चलाया जा रहा है ; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार ने इस उद्योग को उत्पाद शुल्क से मुक्त किया है; यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं ?

वित्त मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री एम०वी० चन्द्रशेखर मूर्ति) : (क) जी, हां

(ख) कांच के नगीने जड़ित लाख की चूड़ियों को उत्पाद शुल्क से पहले ही छूट प्राप्त है।